

CURIOUS DREAM ABOUT ARISTOCRATS.

We once had in the circle of our acquaintance, five persons of professedly aristocratic taste, who prided themselves upon their *birth*, their *money*, and their *station*. Old portraits lined their walls, of personages so stiff and demure that we feel sure none of them would ever have displaced their ruffs under any penalty but that—of hanging by the neck until they were dead.

We had been listening one evening, for the six hundred and sixty-seventh time, to the hum drum of a young lady (since spinster, now deceased) who made it a point to go over the list of her ancestors, and their exploits, invariably after other topics of conversation were exhausted; and when we state that the extent of her knowledge was limited to the fashions and—her ancestors, the reader may judge how often we bore the infliction during the course of twenty-four hours.

As we were seated in a peculiarly luxurious arm-chair that evening, and the numerous astrals threw a beautiful, yet subdued brilliancy over the aristocratic splendor of the apartment, we first grew reconciled to, and perfectly contented with the tympanium accompaniment; then losing all consciousness, fell asleep, by which exploit we were favored with the following dream:

We appeared to be sitting in another mansion, that of aristocrat No. 1, whose family tree began with a Saxon Earl, and ended with a pompous specimen of humanity, *four feet, six*, worth a million, and who wasn't a lord because he couldn't be. As we looked attentively at a yellow faded picture, representing a meeting of grandees in some starched old court, the canvas suddenly darkened, and opened, when behold! beyond was dimly shadowed the figure of what looked like a man. He was covered with a hairy cloth, and *with his fingers* was digging for roots which his children were voraciously eating. They were so unlike human beings that at first we took them for animals, and should still have considered them so, had we not have read underneath, "the ancestors of A—— B——, Esq." Well, well, thought we, A. B. could never survive *this* sight; nor would he dare to be told that his fortieth grand-sire back lived on acorns, like a pig, and scratched them up like a monkey.

Again the scene changed. Two old men were bandying words together. One of them wrinkled, decrepid, and with filthy garments hanging from his limbs, and old battered hook over his shoulder, stooped over a gutter—it seemed in some narrow English street. Every moment or two he would pick over with the hook, and lift the matted rags swept from the refuse of house and shop.

The other, tattered, barefoot and sooty, a worn out faded red handkerchief folded about his head, a bag over his shoulder, his long fingers clutching a miserable portion of bread, his shrivelled cheeks hanging over a ludicrously high coat-collar that had once evidently fitted some other neck, was a veritable chimney sweep. How did my nerves shrink when a voice said, "these are the grandfathers four generations back of C—— D——, Esq., the prince merchant, and E——

F——, the great financier. Both of them accumulated enough to set their sons up in the *same business* in a more *stylish* way. In consequence the family have steadily acquired wealth and reputation; but tell them not to boast over others, of their ancestors."

Slowly and steadily view No. 2 faded from sight, and a rude sort of butcher stall, or shambles, took its place, behind which stood a coarse burly man, cutting meat and talking familiarly with a stout red-faced woman, who wore shoes, but no stockings. It was curious, but the very thing he was saying was, "them *aristocrats* ain't no better nor you, or I, Betty, vat sells meat and takes in vashing."

"The great, great, great paternal ancestry of G—— H——, the richest man on change, whose great grandfather was made a lord for catching at the runaway horses of Her Majesty," murmured the silvery voice, and before I could think the canvas was again occupied by a man scooping out great ladles of fat from a primitive looking boiler. All around on long shelves were rows of soap-bars, and the material in every process of making was displayed to my astonished vision. At that moment a young lady passed by, attired elaborately, but turning her head in an opposite direction to avoid, so we thought, the glance of the soap-maker.

"I—— J——, Esq., who feels himself above attending to any plebeian business, might learn a lesson from this scene, methinks," whispered the voice at my side; "here is the first germ of aristocracy. The soap-boiler, an honest, high-minded man, personally superintending the business from which he is realizing a vast fortune, stands before you, the ancestor of I—— J——, Esq., and his daughter, ashamed of his calling, refuses to notice him. This child, whom he idolized, married a beggared lord, and that was the foundation of what he calls greatness."

Suddenly we became conscious of a low monotonous noise; the soap-boiler and his haughty daughter melted strangely away, and with a light start we found ourselves in the identical I—— J——'s parlor, listening to Miss Almira who was just finishing with, "it is said—and I suppose is true, that my father's great great grandfather was distantly related to the Stewarts of England, and that Queen Mary of France was his forty-fifth cousin. If so, then I am distantly related to Queen Victoria of Europe, and I think if ever I go there, I shall claim *cousinship*.—
Boston Olive Branch.